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NEWS AND NOTES

THE ASSOCIATIONS

NEW YORK CITY

Practical suggestions for the improvement of the speech of pupils were discussed at the meeting of the New York City Association of Teachers of English on September 25. District Superintendent Ruth G. McGray gave an address on "Attainable Standards of Speech in the Seventh and Eighth Grades," in which she pointed out the chief causes of the lack of facility in English speech shown by many graduates of elementary schools and presented three methods of improvement. First, there must be smaller classes, so as to admit of individual instruction; secondly, there must be teachers who have had good training in speech; and, thirdly, more time must be given to speaking and reading.

The interest in the subject was such as to call for another program devoted to it. President Gaston announced that plans were being formulated for a speech clinic at which specialists will demonstrate methods of dealing with speech defects. A program will be arranged for the discussion of the "Oral Interpretation of Literature," and the members of the association will give a play.

INDIANA

The Indiana Association of Teachers of English held two sessions, with a very large attendance at each, in Indianapolis on October 28 and 29, the chief speaker at both sessions being the national secretary. The topic at the first session, "Measurements in English," was timely because of the prominence which has been given to it by Indiana University. Earle Hudleson of that institution gave a graphic account of the attempts to use scales in the high school connected with the university. Mr. Hosic surveyed briefly the various published scales, described what he believed to be the only really satisfactory type of scale, namely, the multiple scale by grades, and emphasized the distinction between standards of attainment and objective measurements.

At the second session, William N. Otto, of Shortridge High School in Indianapolis, read a paper on "The Individual in the Classroom," arguing for real situations and personal points of view. He was followed by

J. B. Wisely, of the State Normal School at Terre Haute, who presented the claims of the Hopkins Committee. Mr. Hosis's second address was entitled "Shall the Student of English Learn Why?" and was devoted to a plea for a vital treatment of technique as a means and not an end, the teacher using her superior knowledge in guiding the observation and reflection of the pupils, not in giving them abstract generalizations.

MISSOURI

The annual meeting of the Missouri Association of Teachers of English was held on November 4 in Kansas City in connection with the State Teachers' Association. The main topic was "How Can the English Work of the Missouri Schools Be Standardized?" This was discussed by Edwin M. Hopkins, of Kansas State University, James F. Hosis, of the Chicago Normal College, and W. W. Charters and H. M. Belden of the University of Missouri. The principal suggestions which were made related to the organization of progressively maturing activities, the working out of standards of attainment, and the development of scales. The appointment of committees of investigation and the organization of district conferences throughout the state were urged.

The association voted to separate from the other modern language associations and work independently. The officers for the ensuing year are: President, Alvin M. Johnson, Northeast High School, Kansas City; Secretary, Amanda Beaumont, Central High School, St. Joseph.

NORTH DAKOTA

The chief place on the program of the fourth annual meeting of the North Dakota Association of Teachers of English was given to a discussion of the new high-school course in English in that state. The following papers were read: "High-School Dramatics," by Jean Porterfield, Grand Forks; "A Message from the Committee on the Improvement of American Speech," by Frederick H. Koch, Grand Forks; "Standards of Measurement in English Composition," by Ella M. Robertson.

A question box on the newly adopted plan of separating the study of literature from the study of composition was conducted by Dean Squires, of the University of North Dakota.

The following officers were elected: President, Vernon P. Squires, University of North Dakota; Vice-President, Ida Kirk, Niagara; Secretary-Treasurer, Blanche True, Fargo College; Members of the Executive Committee, Ella Robertson, Bathgate, and A. E. Minard, Agricultural College.

BLANCHE TRUE

SUMMIT COUNTY, OHIO

The Summit County Association of English Teachers is now a year old. The officers for the past year were re-elected for the coming year. Dean A. I. Spanton, University of Akron, is president; Miss Anna Corbett, Akron Central High School, vice-president; Inez Parshall, Akron Central High School, secretary and treasurer.

During the past year we have enjoyed many talks on subjects of interest to us. These discussions have been led by our own members, except in one case when Professor Bay, of the Perkins Normal School, addressed us on "Logical Composition and the Training of Thought." The following subjects were discussed: (1) "What Preparation the High-School Student Should Have in Rhetoric, Grammar, and Composition When He Enters College," by Professor F. D. Sturtevant; (2) "The Teaching of Literature in High School," by Dean A. I. Spanton; (3) "The Effect of a Six-Year High-School Course upon English Work," by Miss Harriet Dodge; (4) "What Should Be Required in Composition in the Several Years of the High-School Course," by Miss Anna Corbett; (5) "Can the Teaching of English Be Made Definite, Thorough, and Intensive as Well as Interesting?" by Ralph E. Chapel.

At each meeting one member reported on the good and suggestive articles for the English teacher in the current magazines.

INEZ PARSHALL

WEST VIRGINIA

The mid-year meeting of the West Virginia Council of English Teachers was held at Parkersburg on October 29 and 30. On the general topic of oral English the following papers were read: "Sources of Material for Oral Composition," by Kathleen Nicholson, Charleston High School; "Organization of Work and Conduct of the Class," by Winifred Cruikshank, Williamstown High School; "Oral Reading," by Ellen McBride, Charleston High School; "Standards of Judging Oral English," by Nellie Saunders, Salem High School. The problems of written English were canvassed as follows: Aims, Helen Joan Hultman, St. Mary's High School; Materials and Scope, Dora B. Rogers, Parkersburg High School; Assignment, Conduct, and Criticism, Lorena L. Fries, Glenville State Normal School. Other topics and speakers were: "Some Problems of the Teacher of English," A. G. Beach, Marietta College; "Relation between Literature and Work," W. H. Franklin, Marshall College State Normal; "What Is Wrong with Our Methods?" R. E. Horner, Editor of the *Parkersburg State Journal* and "The Possibilities of the English Council," Walter Barnes, of the Fairmont State Normal School.

TYRONE, PENNSYLVANIA

The third annual conference of teachers of English in the counties accessible to Tyrone, Pennsylvania, was held October 23, 1915, under the direction of C. D. Koch, state inspector of high schools. Teachers of the upper elementary grades as well as those in the high schools were invited. The morning session was devoted mainly to discussion of the possibilities of a direct method of teaching English. Miss Ethel Myers taught a high-school class in order to provide definite material for discussion. In the afternoon attention was directed to the use of magazines.

A COMMITTEE ON HIGH-SCHOOL LIBRARIES IN THE SECONDARY DEPARTMENT OF THE N.E.A.

At the session of the Secondary Department of the National Education Association on August 23 a motion was passed authorizing the presiding officer to appoint a Committee on High-School Libraries. The chairman, Miss Emma J. Breck, of Oakland, California, named the following committee, subject to such additions as might later seem advisable in order to secure the necessary geographical representation: Mr. C. C. Certain, Auburn, Alabama, chairman; Miss Ella Morgan, Los Angeles, California; Mr. R. T. Hargreaves, Spokane, Washington. Other persons who have been requested to serve on the committee are: Miss Hanna Lagosa, Chicago, Illinois; Mr. Jesse B. Davis, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Mr. Allan Abbott, New York City; Miss Mary E. Hall, Brooklyn, New York; Mr. Charles Gayman, Toledo, Ohio.

The object of the committee is: (1) to bring high-school teachers to a realization of the value of the high-school library as a center of intelligence and refinement in school life; (2) to demonstrate its helpfulness to all subjects of the high-school curriculum; (3) to determine the best method of control in order that it may contribute the greatest good to the school.

This committee will endeavor to arrange a joint meeting of the Secondary Department and the Library Department of the National Education Association to be held in New York at the 1916 session.

The specific functions of the committee are to discover: (1) through investigations made in the high schools in the several sections of the country the organic relationship between the library and English, modern language, history, mathematics, science, commercial subjects, and manual arts; (2) under what conditions this relationship can best be fostered by: (a) school-board control, (b) public-library control.

THE AMERICAN DIALECT SOCIETY

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The American Dialect Society was organized for the purpose of making a careful study of the characteristics "of the spoken English of the United States and Canada, and incidentally of other non-aboriginal dialects spoken in the same countries."

The work is literary, historical, and scientific. It is important, interesting, and vital. It should have the support and co-operation of all who are interested in the history of our speech or in its present tendencies.

It is a well-known fact that in the English spoken in the United States there are many variations from the literary standard—variations which greatly differ in different parts of the country. This fact is brought to the attention of the most unobservant reader, by the abundant use of "dialect," or what passes for "dialect," in the present crop of American novels, and of British novels that profess to deal with "American life." But most persons are prone to look upon these variations simply as the errors of the ignorant—"bad grammar" to be avoided, "bad usage" to be suppressed. The notion that they can have any value to the scientific student of language is strange to a surprisingly large number of people. The truth is, however, that these variations represent one of the most important groups or classes of fact on which the scientific study of language rests. Many of them are survivals from older periods—decayed aristocrats of the language, perhaps worthy to be restored to their heritage; many are new words formed or adopted to meet a new need arising from new conditions, and so have gained, or are sure to gain, a place in standard English. Many represent variations in

pronunciation, illustrating changes which are constantly going on in the development of the spoken language, and furnishing valuable data for arriving at conclusions concerning the laws which govern such changes. The philologist who has to work with such material needs to know, from a trustworthy source, the exact locality where each word or phrase is used; just what it means to those who use it; just what local variations there are, in its form and meaning; just when each new word came in or old word went out of use.

There have been many attempts, more or less useful, varying in scope from a "Dictionary of Americanisms" to a newspaper paragraph, to collect and publish such information; but all of them are unsatisfactory, for the reason that no one person has the means at his command for giving a complete account of any one word. The apparent supply of "material" in the novels which profess to represent "dialect" is an embarrassment, not of riches, but of rubbish—a heap of counterfeit coin in which only a trained eye can detect the genuine pieces; for the authors, having for the most part no access to true sources, often supply, from very dubious sources, or from their own imagination, what they cannot get at first hand.

Since the organization of the Society it has published and distributed to the members a large amount of valuable matter in *Dialect Notes*. It has also secured, from persons whom it has persuaded to undertake the collection of words and phrases, many thousands of dictionary slips, which have been arranged in alphabetic order. These form the nucleus of an *American Dialect Dictionary*, which the Society proposes to publish when the material is sufficient, and which will surely be a work of great interest to every educated American.

The Society needs a larger membership, more widely spread. From more members there will be more contributions of matter, and more fees with which more printing can be done. All persons who take any interest in the work are invited to join, even if they contribute nothing but the membership fee; and all are invited to send in dialect matter, even if they do not join.

The membership fee is one dollar (four shillings, four marks, or five francs) a year, payable by money order, draft on New York, or registered letter. The annual fee entitles the member to all the publications for that year. Any person or institution may become a member. Address the Secretary or the Treasurer. The back numbers of *Dialect Notes*, the official publication of the Society, can be had of the Secretary at one dollar a number.